

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3403

December 1, 2005

The Honorable Bill Frist
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Frist and Reid:



As you develop the Senate schedule for the balance of this session, we urge that you not adjourn the Senate before it has the opportunity to consider a comprehensive, emergency economic and disaster assistance program for our nation's farmers and ranchers.

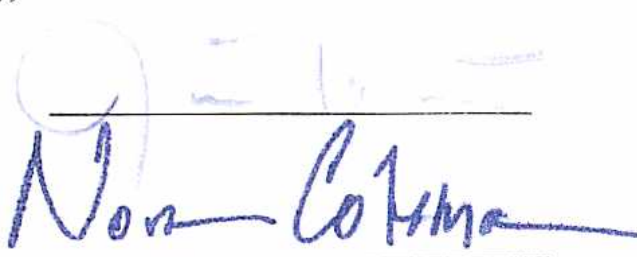
Emergency assistance for farmers and ranchers is necessary because of the loss of crops and livestock due to weather related causes, including Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma as well as losses caused by drought, flood and disease in other parts of the nation. In addition, farmers and ranchers have suffered significant income losses this year due to rapidly escalating input and transportation surcharge costs associated with rising energy prices. As you know, our farmers cannot pass these added expenses on to their consumers due to the nature of agricultural markets.

As you are aware, several bills have already been introduced in the Senate to provide this type of assistance to our agricultural producers. The supporters of these initiatives were requested to withhold offering them as amendments to the supplemental appropriations for hurricane relief as well as the annual agriculture appropriations bills in order to expedite the consideration and passage of those bills. Senators agreed to that request with the understanding that agricultural disaster assistance would be considered as part of other legislation that would come before the Senate this year.

As the Senate concludes its agenda for the current session, we hope you will honor the commitment that agricultural disaster assistance will receive appropriate attention before we adjourn.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar

W. J. G. G. G. G.

Billie

Nellie Stenew

Sci Dubin

Mac Dayton

Chris Dorn

John Johnson

Mark Boyer

E. Benjamin Nelson

Maria C. C. C.

Ernest L. Kopp

Don W. W.

Jim J. J. J.

Patty Murray

Carl L. L.

Bill Nelson

Pat P.